Assessment Leadership Team

October 4, 2019

Attendance: Andre Kummerow, Nathan Myers, Brian Stone, Shelley Arvin, Eric Hampton, Greg Bierly, Laura Froelicher, Deanna Fry, Kelley Woods-Johnson, Lauren Baines (from Student Health Promotions, observing as a student)

Shelley Arvin had no report. She indicated we will be trying to keep meetings to 45-50 minutes.

Deanna, the assessment council graduate assistant. gave a presentation on assessment councils at other universities. She worked from a list of Midwest universities to search the web for information about their assessment councils. She provided overview, with the caveat that little information was provided on-line about assessment councils and how they are governed.

Deanna looked at 18 universities outside of Indiana, and 12 gave some information about their assessment councils. She also looked at 11 universities inside of Indiana. In regard to terms, most assessment council members serve 3 or 5 years. Membership ranged from 3-30 people. There was no information available on bylaws, voting rights, and guidelines for voting.

Kelley explained she wanted information about updating the council’s bylaws. She wants to be comprehensive about making updates and addressing any issues that might affect approval of changes. She and Deanna will discuss whether any further investigation as necessary.

Brian suggested seeking information on list servs. Kelley may use the Assess list serv.

Kelley gave an update on the upcoming Learning Connections Summit. The schedule should be out next week pending final confirmations. Kelley, Shelley, and Brian will be presenting. ISU Talks had a significant amount of proposals which led to a change in the structure of the summit. The schedule will be announced for Teaching Tuesdays and the daily news.

In news from the Learning Management Review committee, they are looking at potential changes to Blackboard. The group has comprehensive representation and will represent assessment interests. Blackboard is becoming “prehistoric,” as no new patches or updates are being created. A new product, Blackboard Ultra, is under development. A primary concern among faculty is that the transition needs to be smooth and they need to be able to transfer material between platforms. The last transition along these lines was not smooth.

Andreas indicated that the OIT committee is having the same conversation.

Kelley reported that Whitney Nesser will join Chris Fischer as the associate dean representative for the council. Very excited.

The election results for the position of vice chair was announced. Brian Stone won on a 5-3 vote.

The next topic was member outreach meetings. Nathan reported meeting with Associate Dean Chris Fischer. Fischer indicated that departments with sound regimes could work with other departments to develop their assessment programs, although some departments (chemistry/physics) have approaches unique to the discipline. He also expressed concern that there was not substantive discussion of assessment results in some departments. Fischer would like to see more discussion linking assessment with pedagogy. Perhaps the College of Arts and Sciences could explore having their own event to celebrate superior assessment work.

Brian met with Chris Fischer, too. In regard to writing assessment, four members do assessment and results go into the ether. Assessment is about meeting an administrative requirement. Brian says we need money for assessment and to get more people involved in assessment. Attention needs to be given to foundational studies assessment. In Foundational Studies there is no feedback loop. Assessment feels like administrative oversight with no opportunity for professional development. More involvement is needed and there also needs to be a feedback loop. There is Resistance to assessment that is historical and it is considered a chore.

Kelley noted that she sees more participation from Literature, Languages, and Linguistics than English because of leadership buy-in.

Andreas reported on having Kelley come to the College of Health and Human Services meeting to talk about how to disperse information. Many programs accredited. The next step is to get non-accredited programs to do assessment in a way that doesn’t cause a burden. Andreas acknowledged the help of University College. Very in helping with the assessment for a UDIE course. There was a feedback loop there. Kelley noted they are finding ways to involve faculty.

Eric spoke with the Dean, Assoc. Dean, Chairs, and Program Directors in the College of Education. They expressed a variety of concerns. Official Blue Report data not always correct. They think they do assessment well because of accreditation. They are concerned about assessment requirements from the Graduate Council. University assessment needs to fit with accreditation processes, as they have both graduate and undergraduate accreditors. Much of accreditation is standards based, looking at various aspects of quality: Diversity, technology, etc. Eric made the case that accreditation and assessment are related. The next accreditation is three years out.

Program directors would like accrediting documents to be accepted in a system like FAD where it is one time in, many times out. All colleges should have one major coordinator to deal with multiple accreditors. What upsets people is repackaging for reporting. CAPE requires assessment.

Kelley wants to help people find overlap. HHS can attach some information from accreditation reports.

Shelley reported being on a Graduate Council subcommittee working on revising procedure.

Eric indicated there was not a lot of specifics on refining program review.

Greg and Laura indicated that once faculty council constitution finished, they can talk with honors faculty about assessment.

Kelley said the findings are not surprising, but shows the need for more conversation. Some individual programs do it purposefully and meaningfully. We need to look at how we avoid duplicate work, in the absence of a management system. In the coming year, we will look at changing the format. Consistency prior to accreditation visit is important. We need to ask: What would make assessment useful as opposed to just documenting? We need to have a broad and open conversation.

Conversation turned to the Excellence in Assessment Designation. NILOA recognizes universities that are using best practices at the institution level. EIA uses process and rubric to grade assessment performance. It can be used to identify areas for meaningful change. It would help us to know where to guide our energies so we can tailor institutional needs and relate our work to the broader context. We should look at the rubric and consider it as a possible tool for advancing practice. IUPUI Assessment Institute is having an event involving “speed dating” with EIA to get more information.

Eric said it would be interesting to figure out how close or far we are. Rose-Hulman was one of the first EIA designees. Jordan Trachtenburg could come talk to us.

Meeting adjourned at 9:38 AM.